

# Intangible Cultural Heritage Update

News and notes on  
Newfoundland and Labrador's  
Intangible Cultural  
Heritage Program

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[ich@heritagefoundation.ca](mailto:ich@heritagefoundation.ca)

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## Turning the Sod on “Seeds to Supper”

For the past three years the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador has supported a local folklife festival in the province. The goal of the festival is to celebrate these otherwise unspoken traditions that may be taken for granted. This year's theme has an agricultural focus.

This year we hope to coordinate events with a number of the groups in the greater St. John's area to promote the historical background of agriculture, and the contemporary movements that are active in the area. We wish to highlight the agri-culture that comes from the past but remains contemporary. Participation as a part of the 2011 Folklife Festival, *Seeds to Supper*, will be of no cost to any groups wishing to hold an event however, all participating groups are responsible for their individual event.

If you are a group, or individual, who would be willing to host an event during our *Seeds to Supper* festival we would like you to come to our community planning meeting on Wednesday June 15th, 2011 at 7pm at the Community Meeting Room, Sobey's on Merrymeeting Rd., St. John's. If you are interested in participating we can help you promote your event and be a part of *Seeds to Supper*. This meeting is for the initial planning stage of the festival so that we may coordinate the who's, what's, and when's.

Please contact Mel at 1-888-739-1892 ext 3 to register or email : [ichprograms@gmail.com](mailto:ichprograms@gmail.com) for more information.

*(photo of the Aubrey and Elizabeth Crowley root cellar, Ochre Pit Cove, courtesy HFNL)*

## Young Folklorists program a success

*By Dale Jarvis*

The last week of May, a group of sixteen students from Grades 7 to 9 came to the Newman Building to learn what a folklorist does all day. As part of the Eastern School District's Mini Course enrichment program, students participated in a two-day folklore field school. On their first day, they learned how to interview people about local stories and history. After learning the Do's and Don'ts of interviewing, the students set out and interviewed Andrea O'Brien at the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador; Gail King at Canada Post; Donna Bishop at City of St. John's Tourism; Derrick and Roger Chafe at William L. Chafe and Sons; and Kelly L. Jones at Britannia Teas and Gifts.

On the second day, students brought in a story that dealt in some way with supernatural belief. We worked on retelling their stories, complete with a visit to the (possibly haunted) Newman Wine Vaults. The day ended with a folk belief scavenger hunt along Water Street.

"It was, by far, the best enrichment I've been to!" said Grade Nine student Nicole Doyle from St. Michael's Regional High, Bell Island.

Some of the students' stories and interviews will be posted on the ICH blog, and on Memorial's Digital Archive Initiative. Stay tuned!



## "All in a Day's Work"

2011 Award Winning Projects from the Vista School Board Region on display at Ryan Premises National Historic Site of Canada.

*By Pat Carroll*

The annual Heritage Fair is an event that encourages students to develop projects that express their heritage. The Heritage Fair program was a national event started by the Bronfman Foundation in 1993. In 1999 it was taken over by the Historica Foundation. The Historica Foundation has not been able to support a National Heritage Fair program for the last two years, but, organizing committees from each of the provinces have kept the program alive with regional and local school level fairs.

The goal of the Heritage Fair program is to inspire school children to explore Canada's history by creating projects that express their own unique culture and history. It also enables teachers to creatively incorporate local and national historic themes into their curriculum.

Eight regional fairs are held in Newfoundland and Labrador each year. Since 2006 the Vista School Board Region has held its Regional Heritage Fair in the historic town of Trinity. The school's represented at this year's fair include Bishop White Elementary School, Port Rexton; Balboa Elementary School, Shoal Harbour; Clarenville Middle School, Clarenville; St. Marks Elementary School, King's Cove; Catalina Elementary, Catalina; Matthew Elementary School, Bonavista.

This year's theme was "All in a Day's Work." Students were encouraged to explore this theme or create a project on a topic of their choice. The projects exhibited at the Ryan Premises in Bonavista represent a selection of the winning entries. They will be on display from May 28 – June 11, 2011.







*"The photograph was made on Change Islands as part of a project I have been photographing for some time. The project deals with various aspects of small islands and island life and spans, so far, two countries and two provinces." Bojan Furst, [www.bojanfurst.com](http://www.bojanfurst.com)*

## ICH Program Awarded Grant to Document Root Cellar Traditions

*By Crystal Braye*

The Helen Creighton Folklore Society (HCFS) has awarded a grant valued at \$750 to help support our 3rd annual Folklife Festival. Named for folklorist Helen Creighton (1899-1989) who conducted work on traditional music and lore of Maritime Canada, the HCFS promotes projects that reflect the diversity of the region as revealed in the work started by Dr. Creighton. The Society encourages and supports the work of scholars, researchers, museums, and archives in the research, collection and publication of folklore and folklife, primarily related to the Atlantic Canada Region.

The funding provided by the HCFS will help to support this year's annual Folklife Festival *Seeds to Supper*, which will focus on agriculture, farming traditions, food production, and animal husbandry. Agriculture traditions have been identified an area of Newfoundland and Labrador folklife that is currently undergoing rapid transformation. The festival will explore the historical significance of agricultural, contemporary traditions, food security and self-sufficiency movements that are active in the Northern Avalon Region. As part of this project, interviews with famers and food producers will be conducted on local farming practices and will be made available online. Local tradition bearers will be identified and interviewed so that their knowledge and skills can be recorded and showcased as part of the 2011 Folklife Festival.





Traditional root cellars will be an area of particular interest. These underground or partially underground structures are used to protect food such as vegetables, berries and preservatives from frost in the winter and heat in the summer. They were constructed by digging a hole in the earth, reinforcing with wood, rock, and mortar, and then covering with sod leaving small door for access. Once commonplace throughout Newfoundland, root cellars provide consistent humidity and temperature levels essential for food security prior to the introduction of electricity and refrigeration.

In addition to being a source of folklore in children's games, fairy legends and other local lore, root cellars found throughout the province have become a prominent symbol of Newfoundland's agricultural heritage and also represent current potential for food

conscious practices. *Seeds to Supper* will document the importance of root cellars to early farming and gardening practices in Newfoundland and reveal the ways in which this revived interest is taking shape in food security and self-sufficiency movements within our province.

*If you have a root cellar you currently use, or memories of root cellars in your family's past that you would like to share, contact Crystal Braye at 1-888-739-1892 ext 5, or email her at [folklore.coop@gmail.com](mailto:folklore.coop@gmail.com).*

*Photo above: Double door construction on a restored root cellar along the Bay Roberts Heritage Trail. Photo courtesy Barbara Jarvis.*

*Photos below: Various styles and sizes of root cellars from Elliston and Maberly, Bonavista Peninsula. Photos courtesy Barbara Jarvis and HFNL.*





## New Addition to ICH Office Is A Jewel

Public Folklore Co-Op Graduate Student, Crystal Braye, starts work on Folklife Fest 2011

*by Melissa Squarey*

As the summer season springs upon us here at the ICH Office our staff seem to be multiplying. We have a new summer staff student working with us this summer on the 2011 Folklife Festival, Seeds to Supper.

Crystal Braye, originally from Ontario, is a Master of Arts student the Public Folklore program at Memorial University.

"The primary focus of the summer intern will be to work on oral history interviews with participants in the 3rd Annual Folklife Festival, help coordinate workshops, presentations and demonstrations, and then place collected material online as part of a special topic collection on the Intangible Cultural Heritage Inventory," says Dale Jarvis, HFNL's ICH Development Officer.



"Crystal will primarily document and identify key informants for research, as well as conduct oral history interviews."

The Department of Folklore and the Division of Co-operative Education at Memorial have recently partnered to offer a co-op option as part of the folklore MA program.

Students will spend two full terms at culture and heritage-related placements, including museums, archives, festivals, cultural and economic development organizations, tourism destinations and more.

"We decided to institute this stream in recognition of the fact that the jobs for folklore graduates don't lie only in universities, but also in the greater community," explained acting folklore department head, Dr. Martin Lovelace.

Crystal came to complete her graduate degree here for a couple of reasons, one of them is the uniqueness of the Public Folklore program at Memorial and the other involves her family connection to Newfoundland and Labrador.

Over the next few weeks, Crystal will be busy gearing up for the Folklife Festival and getting a first hand experience in the field as a public folklorist working in the Intangible Cultural Heritage office.

In speaking with Crystal, it is easy to see how her love of folklore will benefit her work here at the ICH office.

"It's a great way to learn the practical ways in which folklore fits into the real world," says Crystal. "I get to learn about how folklore works among the people who are using and creating it while I'm learning about it in my program."

Crystal says that she is excited about the job she's going to be doing this summer at the ICH office.

"It's great experience that I can apply to my future opportunities, and having career experience in folklore before leaving the Masters program is incredibly beneficial."